

Sportsmen's Act, Public Lands Provisions

Provisions from the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act that U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) and Chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) introduced were adopted as an amendment to S. 2012, the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015.

Senator Heinrich also worked to advance key conservation and public lands measures, including permanently reauthorizing the Land and Water Conservation Fund; establishing two new wilderness areas within the Río Grande del Norte National Monument northwest of Taos, New Mexico; and improving the process for approving solar, wind, and geothermal projects on public lands.

Senator Heinrich led to effort to secure the following provisions:

Hunt Unrestricted on National Treasures (HUNT) Act

Directs all federal public land management agencies to identify high priority federal lands where hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation are permitted but where access is non-existent or significantly restricted, and develop plans to provide access.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Reauthorization

Permanently reauthorizes the LWCF, with set-asides for recreational access and for conservation programs managed by states.

Wilderness Areas in Río Grande del Norte National Monument

Establishes two wilderness areas, the Cerro del Yuta Wilderness and Rio San Antonio Wilderness, within the Río Grande del Norte National Monument northwest of Taos, New Mexico.

Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act Reauthorization (FLTFA)

Reauthorizes FLTFA, to direct revenue from the sale of public land to the acquisition of high priority conservation lands from willing sellers to expand fish and wildlife habitat and public recreational opportunities.

Development of Renewable Energy Projects on Public Lands

Improves and expedites the environmental review of solar, wind, and geothermal projects on public lands--focusing development in locations with minimal wildlife, water, or recreational conflicts--and establishes a program at the Department of the Interior to make the permitting process more efficient.

Other provisions Senator Heinrich supported in the final passage were:

Permits for Film Crews of Three People or Less

Directs the public land management agencies to develop a uniform commercial film fee schedule and exempts film crews of three people or fewer with minimal equipment from the commercial filming fee. It clarifies that news gathering is a non-commercial activity that does not require a commercial film permit.

Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage Opportunities Act

Requires Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service lands to be open for recreational hunting fishing and shooting unless specifically closed through an open and public process.

Equal Access to Justice Act and Judgment Fund Transparency

Requires public reporting of fees, awards, and payments provided under the Equal Access to Justice Act, as well as payments made from the Judgment Fund for claims against the federal government, along with relevant information pertaining to each case. The report would be made accessible online, with protections for private information regarding individual litigants.

Transporting Bows Across National Park Service Lands

Authorizes the lawful transportation of bows and crossbows on National Park Service lands. The National Park Service is prohibited from restricting the lawful transportation of bows and crossbows that remain in the vehicle while in a National Park unit.

Making Public Lands Public

Requires the greater of 1.5 percent or \$10 million of annual Land and Water Conservation Funds be made available for the improvement of recreational access to existing federal lands with significantly restricted public access.

National Park Service Maintenance and Revitalization Conservation Fund

Establishes a National Park Service Critical Maintenance and Revitalization Conservation Fund to address high-priority deferred maintenance needs of the National Park Service with a prohibition on the use of funds for land acquisition.

National Historic Preservation Fund (NHPF)

Permanently reauthorizes the NHPF, the funding source of the preservation awards to the States, Tribes, local governments, and non-profits. The NHPF uses revenues of a non-renewable resource to benefit the preservation of other irreplaceable resources.

Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act

Extends and increases states' authority to allocate Pittman-Robertson funding for shooting ranges on public lands, and encourages federal land agencies to cooperate with state and local governments to maintain shooting ranges.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act Reauthorization (NAWCA)

Reauthorizes NAWCA through 2019, providing matching grants to organizations, state/local governments, and private landowners for the acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of wetlands critical to migratory birds. This program generates three additional dollars for every federal dollar and reduces the annual authorization level from \$75 to \$50 million.

National Fish Habitat Conservation

Authorizes the National Fish Habitat Conservation Program to encourage partnerships among public agencies, tribes, sportsmen, private landowners, and other stakeholders to promote fish conservation.